**NHAI Projects in 2007-08**

1528. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA: PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has not been able to achieve the targets of their development projects in the first nine months of the year 2007-08;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether there is steo^ escalation in several projects of NHAI due to delay in completing the work in time;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken by Government to complete the projects with NHAI, without any further delay?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) Yes, Sir. There is some shortfall in achievement of targets.

(b) The shortfall is due to poor performance of contractors, problems of land acquisition especially in State of Assam, Punjab, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh, delays in obtaining forest clearance in Uttar Pradesh and law & order problem in Assam etc.

(c) and (d) The increase in cost due to escalations are paid as per contract. If the project is delayed due to fault on the part of contractor, liquidated damage is imposed and no escalation is paid. Escalations are paid only in case of default by National Highways Authority of India (NHAI). The actual increase in cost due to escalation can be determined only on completion of the project.

(e) Regular review meetings are being held with contractors and if any slackness is detected notices are issued to being improvements. Contracts with poor performances are being rescinded. Matter is being pursued with the State Governments at highest levels to expedite forest clearances, shifting of utilities and for improving law & order so as to remove the bottlenecks.

**Sethusamudram Project**

t 1529. SHRI LALIT KISHORE CHATURVEDI: DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the total expenditure to be incurred on Sethusamudram project togetherwith the annual income to be earned and the ordinary expenditure to be incurred;

(b) the capacity of ships which could pass through this canal;

(c) whether any study has been conducted with regard to the effect of waste released by ships on fishing industry of this area and health of people consuming contaminated fishes;

t Original notice of the question was received in Hindi